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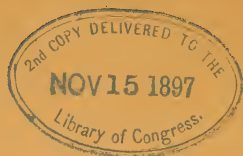
THE DARKEY & COMIC DRAMA

**OTHER PEOPLE'S
TROUBLES**



Chicago.

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.



OTHER PEOPLE'S TROUBLES

An Eccentricity in One Scene

BY
FRANK DUMONT

AUTHOR OF "THE SERENADE PARTY," "THE CAKE WALK," "THE
LADY BARBER," ETC.



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CHICAGO
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

[1897]

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Produced by Cameron's minstrels.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

MR. SUSPICIOUS FIDGET.....	<i>Frank Dumont.</i>
JACK } servants.....	<i>Lew Dockstader.</i>
MARTHA }	<i>James Quinn.</i>
MRS. FIDGET.....	<i>Fred Dart.</i>
POLICEMAN GOGGLES.....	<i>Fred Dart.</i>

Plays fifteen minutes

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OTHER PEOPLE'S TROUBLES.

[Scene :—Chamber, door C. Large family portrait in set piece, L. 3 E. Table and chairs, L. C. Screen, R. C. Enter Jack and Martha, R. 1 E., quarreling. Jack carries tray and dishes, Martha blindfolded, follows with tea pot.]

Martha. Take dis rag off my eyes ! I ain't gwine to play blind man's bluff any more. You're the worst jealous nigger I ever saw. You're chock full of green eyed lobsters.

Jack. [Removes bandage.] Do you think I'm going to spend all my wages treating you to lemonade and root beer, and brandy, and then get fooled ?

Martha. Who's fooling you ?

Jack. When we were playing blind man's bluff you caught me and said 'I got you Jim.' My name ain't Jim. You give yourself away that time.

Martha. You're just like the boss. Missus can't peek out of the window but what he gets jealous. If he was my husband, I'd scald him wid de tea pot. [Flourishes tea pot and scalds Jack.]

Jack. [Hopping.] Oh ! look out there ? You've filled my shoe full of hot tea. Look out ! Even a banana skin will turn when you tread upon it !

Martha. You want to step on banana skins, do you ? I'll start the circus for you. [Bus. She chases after him. He throws loaf of bread at her. They rush towards door C. just as Fidget is entering. Martha scalds him and Jack dashes tray and dishes over him, smashing a hat and hat-box that Fidget bears in his arms. Martha and Jack rush off R. and L. Fidget arises and examines the hat. Comes down C.]

Fid. Confound them. There's my seven dollar hat ruined ! Every dish in the house is cracked or broken. I'd discharge

Jack but he is useful to me in playing the spy. He reports everything to me. My wife hires Martha in the same capacity. If I discharge Jack I am without an ally. I must grin and bear it altho' it is driving me crazy! [*Calls.*] Jack! Jack! [*Jack peeps in L. I E.*]

Jack. Hello, Fidget! When did you get in?

Fidget. Come here this instant!

Jack. No, sir! You want to hit me. Ah, you rascal, I know you.

Fid. I won't harm you. Come here.

Jack. You want to kick me.

Fid. No, I've got on my felt slippers.

Jack. I've *felt* 'em before. How's your hat?

Fid. Now come here to me. I want you.

Jack. What do you want? [*Comes towards him and retires, bus ad lib.*]

Fid. Where have you been?

Jack. I got them springs out of the old sofa and put them under the old hen and she's hatching them. We'll soon have some spring chickens. It will save me the trouble of stealing some from the neighbors.

Fid. You're a blockhead! Now listen to me. Last night instead of going to the lodge I watched this house and I saw a policeman enter it.

Jack. [*Going.*] I'm going out in the garden.

Fid. Come here, sir. That policeman is still secreted in this house.

Jack. That's the reason I'm going out. Maybe he wants to see me and I'd better not be visible.

Fid. He won't trouble you, Jack! That policeman is in love with my wife.

Jack. Certainly he is. Now you've struck it.

Fid. You and I will search the house.

Jack. Yes. You go and search for him.

Fid. Jack! something's wrong in this house.

Jack. Certainly, everything's wrong—let's move and hire another house.

Fid. Jack! Never marry a cunning and deceitful woman.

Jack. No. I'll marry an orphan, uncle.

Fid. Where's Martha? [*Martha peeps in R. I E.*]

Jack. There she is!

Fid. Where's your mistress?

Martha. Up in her room. She expects the carpet man to come in and measure this room for a new carpet.

Fid. Prepare a cup of coffee for me, and place this hat in my room.

Martha. Yes, sir. [*Takes hat-box. Jack motions her out. She throws hat-box at Jack and Jack seizing books throws them at her, and missing her, they crash through the portrait. Martha ex. Jack throws hat-box after her.*]

Fid. Now you rascal. Do you see the result of this sky-larking? Now listen a moment. We are on the eve of a great discovery. Here's five dollars for you.

Jack. Shall I smash another picture?

Fid. No! Jack, my wife and Martha are against us. The new carpet man will soon be here. You will represent the individual, and you can keep your eyes and ears open and hear all that transpires. Follow me, we'll solve this mystery. [*Ex. R. I E.*]

Jack. [*Picks up hat-box.*] I'll keep the pot a boiling and keep 'em all fighting. It's to my interest. [*Martha sneaks in and slaps a piece of dough over Jack's face and with her broom fights him off L. I E. Enter Mrs. Fidget C.*]

Mrs. F. Where did Mr. Fidget go to?

Martha. Just gone up to his room!

Mrs. F. My police trick is a success! Did he say anything?

Martha. We didn't give him a chance. Me and Jack nearly killed him and then we lit out.

Mrs. F. Has the carpet man arrived! [*Knock.*]

Martha. I guess dat's him. [*Martha admits Jack who is disguised. He proceeds to measure floor, chairs, wall, etc. Aside.*] Missus, dat's Jack, and he's spying on us.

Mrs. F. [*Aside.*] All right. I'll give him a chance to carry news. [*Aloud.*] Martha, did Mr. Goggles the policeman leave any word for me?

Martha. Yes, he saw your husband coming and he gave me this letter.

Mrs. F. [*Opens letter and reads.*] "My own sweet love: When your beast of a husband leaves the house I will return. Yours ever and ever, "Goggles." [*Jack attempts to see letter during its reading and when discovered he goes about measuring articles.*]

Jack. Goggles—old goggle eyed Goggles.

Mrs. F. Excuse me, Mister Carpet Man. I'll return and give you further instructions in a few moments. [*Ex. R. I E.*]

Martha. Now I'll give him one. [*Opens a letter.*] "My lily-white alabaster angel. To-morrow night be at de ice

cream sociable. "Yours always, "Barber Jim." Excuse me Mister Carpet Man, I'll return again. Ta! Ta! [*Ex. R. I E.*]

Jack. Barber Jim and Goggles run this house! [*Enter Fidget C.*]

Fid. Well, what have you discovered.

Jack. You're shook. You're N. G. Goggles is de man. You're a beast.

Fid. What's that?

Jack. That's what Goggles calls you.

Fid. [*Gives money.*] Now, tell me all about it.

Jack. I heard missus reading a letter and you're shook!

Fid. Then she is false to me. Good-bye, Jack. I'm going!

Jack. Going where?

Fid. Going to leave this world—to die?

Jack. Ha! Ha! Ha! You're foolish, die because she's gone back on you. Pshaw! I thought you had better sense. I'm ashamed of you. Don't weaken. I'd like to see the woman I'd die for. Brace up, never say die.

Fid. I will commit suicide!

Jack. Get out! You're crazy! Let her go if she wants to. You can get another wife. Don't talk like that! Kill yourself for a woman! You're crazy! Don't kill yourself and leave me alone. [*Cries.*]

Fid. Jack, you've been faithful to me. A good, truthful, honest servant.

Jack. [*Crying loud.*] Course I have. Honest as the day am long.

Fid. The moment I am dead, this house, my jewelry, watch, chain, ring, these clothes and all my money are yours.

Jack. [*Stops crying.*] If a woman treated me the way you've been treated I'd kill myself right on the spot, I wouldn't live a minute! Are you going to stand it? Called you a beast, eh? I thought you had pluck! Is that chain real gold?

Fid. Oh, Jack, if I only had a rope to hang myself with. [*Jack rushes off and returns with rope, puts it around Fidget's throat.*]

Jack. There you are! It won't slip! [*Ferks rope, strangles Fidget.*]

Fid. [*Recovering.*] Jack! This is terrible.

Jack. Course it is, I'd hung myself ten years ago if I'd been you. Look out you don't muss that coat when I pull the rope. All the property, money, jewelry, and them clothes is mine when you're dead. Did I understand you right?

Fid. Yes. The instant that life leaves this poor form, everything is yours. [*Jack almost pulls Fidget off his feet in leading him out L. I E. to find a spot to hang him. Martha enters R. I E.*]

Martha. [*Laughs.*] Jack's going to hang him— Ah! here they come back. [*She hides under table. Jack and Fidget return L. I E.*]

Jack. You're too particular.

Fid. I've changed my mind. I won't hang myself!

Jack. What! After the way you were abused? I'm going to kill myself as soon as you do. I don't want to live if you die. [*Weeps.*] Do you think that ring will fit me? Don't get any blood on those pants.

Fid. Oh! If I had a pistol— [*Jack rushes off and returns with two pistols—forces them into Fidget's hands.*]

Jack. There they are. Now shoot them into your brains! Quick!

Fid. Are you sure they're loaded?

Jack. Full of slugs, hurry up—what's the use of fooling? I'd shoot myself too if I had a pistol, but you need them both! You've got twice as much brains as I have.

Fid. One is enough for me. Here, take this one. [*Give pistol to Jack.*] We'll die together.

Jack. No—no. You fire first and then when you've dead you tell me and I'll shoot myself. You need two pistols 'cos you've got a lot of brains—see?

Fid. Oh, if I could but drown myself. [*Jack rushes out and obtains pail of water.*]

Jack. Here you are. Come I'll hold your head under water until you're dead. Does that watch keep good time? Come on!

Fid. No, I'm afraid of water!

Jack. Here's some bed bug poison. [*Shows bottle.*] It will kill rats and it ought to kill you too. Come! Drink some! [*Bus.*]

Fid. Oh! If I could only chop my head off. [*Jack obtains an axe, grabs Fidget and is about to behead him.*]

Jack. No more fooling. Lay down and off goes your head. Don't get any blood on them clothes for I want to wear 'em to-morrow to a pic-nic.

Fid. I know what I'll do. I'll go down to the lamp post and fire a pistol. You'll come back and tell my wife I've shot myself. If she doesn't express sorrow I'll give you my word and honor that I'll let you kill me.

Jack. All the money, jewelry and stuff is mine when you're dead ?

Fid. Yes, everything ! [*Ex. L. I E.*]

Jack. I'll get all them valuables if I have to poison him. [*Ex. L. I E. Mrs. Fidget enters R. I E. attired as a policeman. Martha comes from under table.*]

Martha. I heard the whole plot. Master will fire a pistol and Jack comes in to say he is shot. [*Pistol shot L. I E. Jack heard crying and enters.*]

Jack. Oh ! Master is shot and he's dead. His brains is laying out in the street by the barrellfull. Oh ! Oh ! The street is full of brains.

Martha. Is he dead ?

Jack. Of course he is. All his brains is shot out. How could he live ?

Mrs. F. Where is he ?

Jack. Down by the lamp-post waiting to hear what missus thinks about it.

Martha. Tell him we don't care a straw if he's dead or living, for Mr. Goggles is here !

Jack. Ah ! I'll call master, he'll fix him. I hope Goggles will kill him. [*Calls Fidget. Enter Fidget with pistols.*]

Fid. [*To Mrs. F.*] Take this. Take this and defend yourself. [*Puts a pistol into Mrs. F.'s hands.*] I'll murder everybody in the house.

Jack. I'll be blamed if you do. [*Dodges behind screen.*]

Martha. Me too ! [*She goes behind screen. Mrs. F. places herself before screen while Fidget threatens with pistol. Jack and Martha move screen from side to side of stage, Mrs. F. follows to keep out of range of pistols. Fidget furious, fires. Mrs. F. screams and he discovers her. She falls in his arms. He bathes her face with water. Jack and Martha fall over with screen at pistol shot. Neighbors rush in with tub. Jack is placed in tub while Martha is pushed into a bushel basket and a small garden pump worked into her face. Curtain descending leaves Jack and tub outside. He walks off and ex. into curtain side.*]





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